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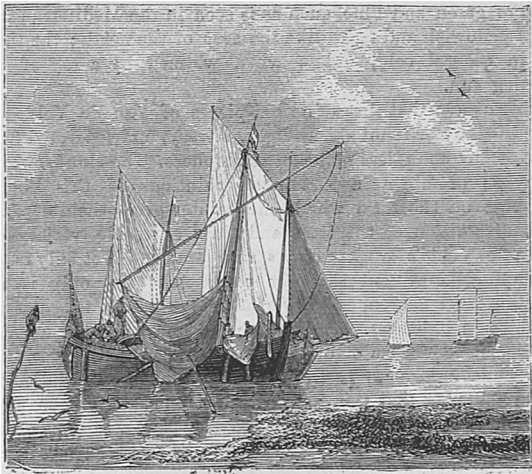
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WILLIAM VAN DE VELDE.

WILLIAM VAN DE VELDE the younger has painted the sea *con amore*, and it is for this reason that he occupies so high a



rank as an artist; it is for this reason also that two nations of sailors, passionately fond of the sea, the English and Dutch, have

bestowed on him the reputation of being the greatest painter of sea-pieces that ever appeared down to his time. And, in truth, no one has more closely observed the agitation of the waves, their breaking or their repose; no one knew better the gait and habits of sailors, the rigging and working of ships, the variety of their build, their picturesque appearance when grouped by chance, and their imposing appearance when isolated between sky and water, the felicity of the lines in their foreshortening, when they rock to and fro slowly, ready to breast the billows. No one has ever felt so deeply the deep calm of the ocean, nor expressed so well the inexpressible emotions inspired by the sight of a fading horizon—the image of infinity.

Talents of so high an order did not show themselves all at once in the Van de Velde family. It is believed that Adrian, the celebrated painter of animals, and William, the younger, were brothers. This is not impossible, and the mention of the supposition reminds us, that in an English collection there is a "Coast of Scheveningen," by William, in which the sea, slightly agitated, is lighted by the hues of twilight, and the small figures in which are painted by Adrian. This goes to confirm the statement as to the existence of some relationship between them. This much, however, is certain—the elder William Van de Velde, the father of the great marine painter, was himself a designer of rare excellence. We shall take this opportunity of saying a few words about him, for the inform-

ation of our readers. He was born in Leyden in 1610. "As he loved sailing on the sea," says Houbraken, "he found means of entering the service of the States on board a small vessel employed in carrying orders to the fleet. Being thoroughly acquainted with the construction of ships, their rigging, and trim of the sails, he set about drawing with a pen upon paper or white canvas all the vessels in the roads, large and small, and finished by grouping together entire fleets upon a single sheet. As soon as he heard that a battle was about to take place, he embarked forthwith with the sole design of being present at the engagement, and so that he might make accurate sketches of the various details. To give greater play to his talents and courage, the States of Holland placed a brig at his disposal, and ordered the commander to carry him to whichever point of the action he wished. He was then seen braving all the perils of a naval engagement, going and coming from place to place, now in the midst of the enemy, and now amongst his own countrymen. Admiral Opdam was astonished to see a man risk his life in pursuit of any glory except that to be obtained by arms. He invited Van de Velde to dine with him in his cabin, and on the very same day, two hours after the painter had taken his departure, the vessel was blown up. He was present also at the battle which took place between the English and Dutch, under the command of Monk and De Ruyter, in sight of Ostend, in 1666, and which lasted for three days with surprising fury. Neither of the fleets made a single movement which Van de Velde did not sketch with singular fidelity. These drawings were made by order of the States, and supplied them with ample information regarding the manœuvres and conduct of their officers. It appears that the fame of them reached England also. Charles II. invited him to enter his service, and after the death of that prince he continued to execute, under James II., official drawings that circumstances sometimes made doubly valuable. He died in London, in 1666, and was buried in St. James's Church.

Such was the father of the painter whose history we are about to write. The passion of the latter for the sea and ships, and his nautical knowledge, were, as we see, hereditary. William Van de Velde the younger was born, as was also Adrian, at Amsterdam, in 1633. His master was an able painter, and a skilful engraver, Simon de Vlioger, who mostly occupied himself in sea-pieces. The elder Van de Velde could only teach his son the elements of design, for he had not given any attention to painting till he was advanced in life, and had then only met with moderate success. His choice of Simon de Vlioger was an excellent one, so that the first sea-pieces sent by William Van de Velde to his father, who was then at London, astonished the whole court. James II. was so pleased with them, that he made him come to London, and settled a handsome pension upon him. Like most great artists, he speedily attained to the eminence which has made his name illustrious. There are paintings signed by him in 1657, when he was only in his twenty-fourth year, and even prior to that date, which are exquisite in every point of view; without mannerism, real *chefs-d'œuvre* of art, in which art is nowhere visible, and nature everywhere. From the very beginning he displayed his predilection for the representation of calms, of those tranquil, unruffled waters, which scarcely smile under the breath of wind, and which, under a clear sky, and in the full light of the sun, resemble a brilliant carpet, slightly wrinkled at its borders.

Van de Velde did wonders with very scanty materials. Without having at his disposal the splendid elements which Claude Lorrain put in motion—without having before his eyes those Italian palaces, those projecting colonnades which served as side scenes to the sea-views of the French painter—he knew how to give the appearance of distance to the background of his canvas, and make the ocean retreat, as it were, from the shore to the horizon. The level line of the horizon placed in contrast with the rounded masses of cloud, the stiffness of the masts and of the shrouds compensated for by the curved line of the sails, more or less distended, and by the sweep of the ships—such are the simple combinations by which Van de Velde has been enabled to interest those even who have never

seen the sea. If sometimes a sand-bank, or a group of fishermen, or the head of a jetty in pile-work, forms the set-off of his composition, oftener still he commences his painting only in the background, and puts nothing in the foreground but a little angry surge, or a buoy tossed by the tide, so that the greater part of his canvas appears to have been painted, not from the shore, but from a vessel at anchor. With means apparently so limited, Van de Velde has, however, produced splendid pictures, as captivating to the eye as they are agreeable to the mind; full of pleasure for those who love art, and full of delight for those who love the sea.

The secret of these impressions is simple truth—truth which he sought and rendered with passion. Owing to persevering and assiduous study, he possessed in the highest possible degree all the elements of which talent in a painter of sea-pieces is composed. He knew all about ships, thoroughly understood the working of them, and could repeat the names of every rope, pulley, and sail. As he was able to distinguish each kind of ship from every other at a glance, he enabled the spectator also to distinguish them in his paintings by the diversity of their forms—oblong, slender, bulging, or flattened; by the difference of their masts, or the size of their topsails; by the colour of their canvas, now unbleached white, now brown, and now black. But it was not only by these details that he caused each variety to be recognised—but also by the *tout ensemble*, the general outline and *character*, in fact—for every variety has its own—well marked too. He perceived and expressed admirably the majesty of the man-of-war, the elegance of the frigate, the magnificence of the yacht, the agility of the brig, the coquetry of the schooner, and the coarseness of the lugger-boat.

His figures, too, were drawn with the highest talent, and yet with the most charming simplicity. This is one of the points in which he excels Backhuysen. He had bestowed the closest attention upon everything relating to the sailor. He knew and could depict admirably his gestures, his attitudes, his dress, and that rolling gait which he insensibly acquires from the habit of walking on the heaving deck. But it was in painting the sea itself that Van de Velde rose to the full height of his genius. The sea was to him not a treacherous element, but an adored mistress; he loved and admired everything about it—its caprices, its fantastic movements, its smiles and caresses, its fury and thunder. His own temperament, however, made him prefer the calm. It was while in a state of rest that he imitated the waters of the ocean with most effect, whether in those light ripples, that feeble undulation, which the Dutch call *kabbeling*, and which dies out with a low noise on the fine sand of the beach, or when in greater agitation they throw up fringes of foam, which fly back in pearly clouds from the dark sides of the ships. His water, truthful and transparent, does not possess the hard tint of green and blue, such as is seen in the Mediterranean; it is yellowish and light, like the seas of the north; the tinge is in general cold, unless when warmed by a ray of the setting sun.

Let us add that these fine sea-pieces of Van de Velde are crowned by brilliant skies—light, silvery, and separated from the eye by boundless plains of atmosphere. The clouds, which play so prominent a part in all paintings of this kind—because on the form which the painter gives them depends the disposition of the lines and their agreeable variety—in Van de Velde's works possess rare beauty. Not only is the grouping happy and skilfully contrasted; not only is the outline well chosen, and never meaningless, but they possess admirable lightness. They appear to move like those which traverse the landscapes of Ruysdael; and as their edges, illuminated by the sun, rise off the blue ground, we can hardly help believing that this ground is disappearing at one point to appear at another. But what constant and assiduous observation, and what painstaking industry, it must have required to attain to such perfection! "Nobody," says Gilpin, "knew better the effects of sky, or had studied them with more attention, than Van de Velde the younger. Not many years ago, an old waterman of the Thames was still living who had often

carried him in his boat to different parts of the river to observe the varied appearance of the heavens. This man related that Van de Velde went out in every sort of weather, fine or wet, and that he took with him large sheets of blue paper which he covered with black and white. An artist will easily perceive the object of this proceeding. Van de Velde called these expeditions, in his Dutch, *going a-showing*—going to make a review of the sky.*

Horace Walpole, in "Anecdotes of Painting," informs us that the pension given by Charles II. to William Van de Velde the younger, amounted, like that of his father, to £100 sterling. Mr. Riwalson, an antiquary, found in the last century the original of the patent which conferred these pensions both on father and son, and communicated this valuable document to Mr. Vertue, who collected the materials for Walpole's work. From it we learn that William Van de Velde, senior, was employed in designing naval battles for the king's private use, and to his son was committed the task of colouring these same drawings. The terms of the letters patent,† granting their pensions, seem to imply that the son was occupied only in the colouring of his father's drawings; but perhaps we should interpret the expression "putting into colours" to mean more than this, and make them refer to the son's talent for painting sea-pieces when the father could only draw them. It was in the year 1675 that this double pension was bestowed on the Van de Veldes; and the date is valuable, as it enables us to fix the precise period, or nearly so, at which the painter left Amsterdam to settle in London. He was then forty-two years of age.

The residence that both chose in London was peculiarly well adapted to the requirements of their profession, as well as to their own tastes. They lodged at Greenwich, and had the continual movement of ships and boats, which is always going on in that part of the river, constantly under their eyes. Hence their profound knowledge of all nautical usages, of the smallest and most minute formalities of the sea, if we may use the expression; hence, too, their exactness in all the details. What is said of Ruysdael with regard to trees, might be said of Van de Velde with regard to ships. As the great landscape painter never put oak-leaves on the branches of a lime-tree, so the marine painter never fastened the sails of a brig to the masts of a schooner. To study the works of Van de Velde is almost to study a course of navigation.

Here is a "Frigate about to set sail." The wind appears to freshen, but the sea, although a little agitated, still reveals in the distance its tranquillizing horizon. A three-decker is at anchor. In the background an armed frigate, with all her sails shaken out, is making ready to gain the offing. The sun has just risen, and a boat full of passengers is rowing towards her, and she is only awaiting its arrival to set sail. In the distance are various ships of different sizes gradually fading from the sight. The frigate, however, is the principal object of the picture, and is drawn and painted with extraordinary care, even in its minutest details. And the minuteness, which in painting a storm would be wholly out of place, here becomes a charm; for if you, like the painter, are

one of the spectators on shore, and have no friend on board, or no personal interest in the departure of the vessel, it is but natural that you should admire all her beauties, the carving which adorns her bows, the order and neatness which reign throughout, the polish of the masts, the tautness of the rigging; and, in short, all the harness of this steed of wood and iron, which is about to walk the wide waters, and is brushed up before its departure.

There is a superb Admiralty yacht, bearing the arms of Amsterdam sculptured upon her, and carrying the admiral's flag at her stern. She is passing between two ships of war, which salute her, and she returns it. Van de Velde has imitated perfectly the white smoke of the cannon; we see it glide over the level surface of the water, in great round masses, which contrast admirably with the straight line of the sea. Fine clouds moving slowly along the sky, cast huge shadows on the ocean, and create splendid contrasts; all the artifices of *chiaro-scuro* lend animation to a scene in which all is tranquillity; the eye is pleased and the attention is awakened, and yet the spectator is not withdrawn from the profound emotions with which the painter has endeavoured to inspire him.

But suddenly the sky is overcast; the sea, so peaceful a minute ago, begins to growl; the wind whistles sharply, and already a long belt of dark clouds seem to unite the sky and water; a furious gale sets in from the north-west. We are at the entrance of the Texel; ships great and small are struggling against the storm in the attempt to reach the port. Amongst them passes a packet-boat, lighted by a solitary gleam of sunshine, and splashed by the rising foam. Another ray of light flickering out through an opening in the clouds shows us the coast of Holland, whose gray and delicate tone contrasts well with the sombre colours of the rest of the picture, and in this the touch of the painter accords admirably with the nature of his subject. Here is no longer the complacent and brilliant execution of the paintings which represent calms, but the broader and freer pencil which tears open the clouds, whitens the sails, and boldly expresses the form of the waves, and is as much agitated as the sea itself.

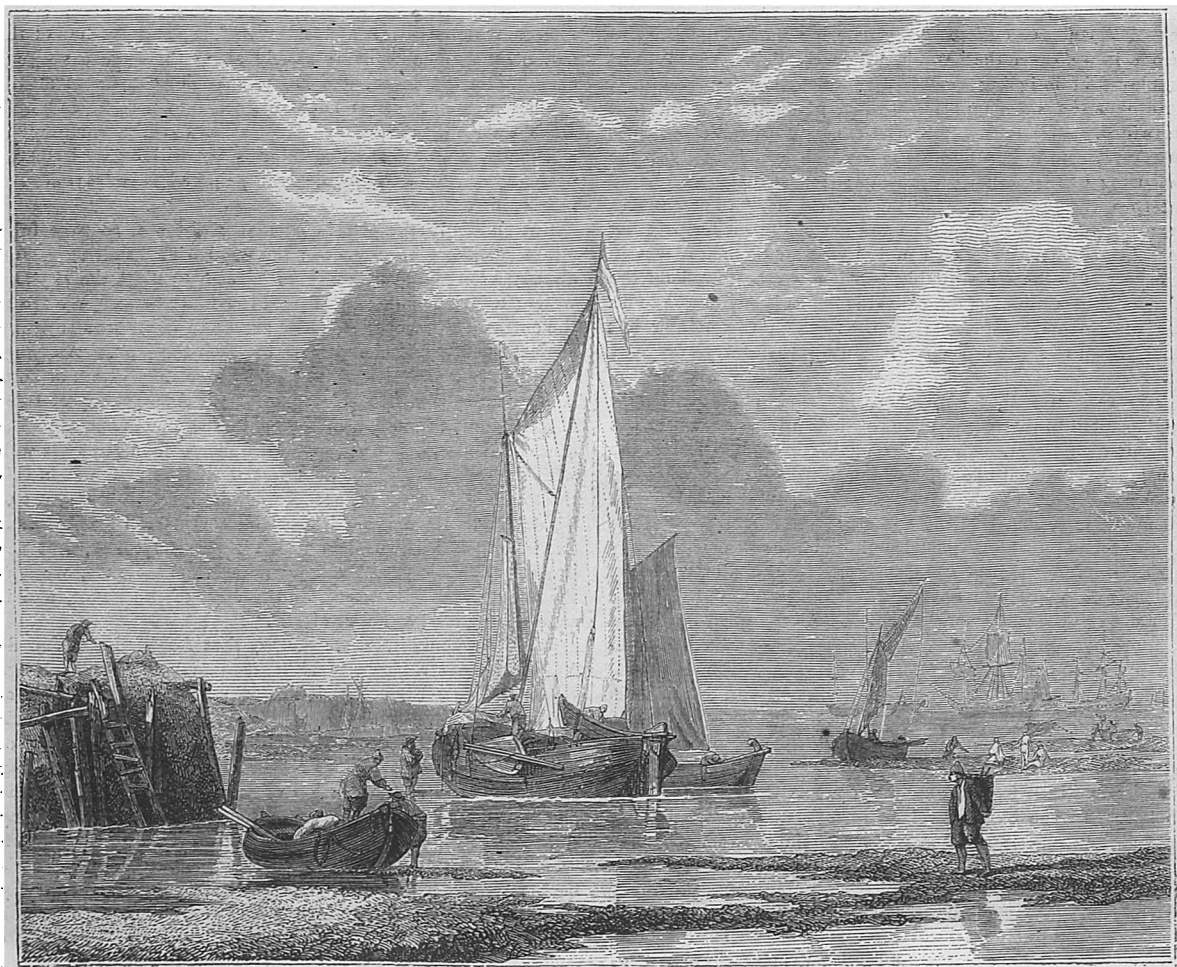
We must remark, nevertheless, that for William Van de Velde to paint a storm is an exceptional case. What we have just now been describing is rather the approach of the storm than the storm itself; and perhaps indeed this is the most poetic course to follow, for the imagination of the spectator is then becoming heated, and is becoming impatient for the termination of the scene. Thus, in the eight pictures of Sir Robert Peel's collection, we see a heavy rolling sea, and over it a cloud hanging very low down casts a dark shadow, which threatens the poor fisherman's bark terribly, and which, as M. Waagen remarks, strongly reminds us of Homer's line: "And from the height of the heavens light plunged upon the earth." We can hardly shut out some feeling of anxiety from our breasts on seeing these frail boats tossed between the descending clouds and the uprising waves. But Van de Velde departs from his natural course when he depicts storms: he is more at home in painting the sea at rest. It is over these tranquil plains that he can best put in motion the few and simple elements of which his great effects are made up—the line of the horizon, the clouds forming like chains of mountains, and the rigging of the boats. Others have endeavoured in their compositions to fill space; Van de Velde seeks to paint it. To open up immensity on the canvas, to roll out infinity upon a flat surface, such has been his pre-occupation, or rather his genius. For this he passed his life upon the water; he made open boats his studio, and went a considerable distance in this way to see De Ruyter's ship caulked, and went down the Thames in the same manner nearly every day to pay a visit to his old and familiar friends—the ocean waves. In Van de Velde's eyes the sea was not the classic and conventional personage represented by a venerable god with a slimy beard, but ocean such as nature has made it, endowed with all the passions of an animated being, with all the irritability of a blind monster, and with the sensibility and appearances of life.

* William Gilpin's "Three Essays upon the Beautiful, Picturesque, &c.," a rare but excellent work.

† It may be interesting to give the exact terms of it. "Charles the Second, by the grace of God, &c. Whereas we have thought fit to allow the salary of one hundred pounds per annum unto W. Van de Velde the elder, for taking and making draughts of sea-fights; and the like salary of one hundred pounds per annum unto W. Van de Velde the younger, for putting the said draughts into colours, for our particular use; our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby authorize and require you to issue your orders for the present and future establishment of the said salaries, to the aforesaid W. Van de Velde the younger, to be paid unto one or other of them during our pleasure, and for so doing this shall be your sufficient warrant and discharge. Given under our privy seal at our palace of Westminster, the 20th day of February, in the 26th year of our reign."—*Anecdotes of Painting in England*. Charles II. dated his reign from the year in which his father was beheaded, 1649; that the twenty-sixth year of which he speaks must be 1675.

However, the title and the pension which he had received from Charles II. compelled him, from time to time, to paint official pictures, if we may use the expression—fleets not ranged so as to please the eye, but according to the rules of tactics or the caprices of the admiral—vessels which, to secure historical accuracy, should fulfil a certain duty, or be sketched at a certain moment. Many of these compositions may still be seen at Hampton Court. Horace Walpole informs us that at Buckingham Palace there was one representing the Battle of Solebay, which Van de Velde the elder painted from nature, or perhaps we should rather say *ad vivum*, having attended the engagement in a light sloop by order of the Duke of

well adapted for the display of their genius. Van de Velde painted, at one time, the united French and English fleets in the place where Charles II. went to see them. The king is represented in the picture in the act of stepping on board his yacht. Horace Walpole informs us, "that two commissioners of the Admiralty agreed to beg it of the king, to cut it in two, and each to take a part. The painter, in whose presence they concluded this wise treaty, took away the picture, and concealed it till the king's death, when he offered it to Bullfinch, the printseller (from whom Vertue had the story), for fourscore pounds. Bullfinch took time to consider, and returning to the purchase, found the picture sold for 130 guineas. After-



A CALM.—FROM A PAINTING BY W. VAN DE VELDE.

York.* Weisbrod,† Captain Baillie, and several other English engravers, have preserved some of these compositions, belonging to both the father and the son, though none of them were

* "Several are at Hampton Court, and at Hinchinbrook. At Buckingham House was a view of Solebay fight, with a long inscription. Van de Velde, by order of the Duke of York, attended the engagement in a small vessel."—*Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting*.

† Charles Weisbrod, designer and engraver, was born at Ham-
burgh in 1754, and came very young to Paris, for the purpose not
of learning to engrave, for he had already acquired the art, but to
perfect himself in it under the tuition of John George Wille, who
was the master *par excellence*. His great talent lay in seizing on
the spirit of a painting, and rendering it in a lively and vigorous
manner in a rapid etching. He was, therefore, admirably fitted
for executing those free and hasty engravings which lend value to
the original, though they make no pretensions to translate it.

wards it was in possession of Mr. Stone, a merchant retired
into Oxfordshire."

William Van de Velde died in London in 1707, as stated in
the following inscription:—

Gulielmus Van de Velde, junior,
Navium et prospectum marinarum pictor,
Et ob singularem in illa arte peritiam,
A Carlo et Jacobo Secundo Magnæ Britanniae regibus
Annua mercede donatus.
Obiit 6 April, A. D. 1707,
Ætatis suæ, 74.

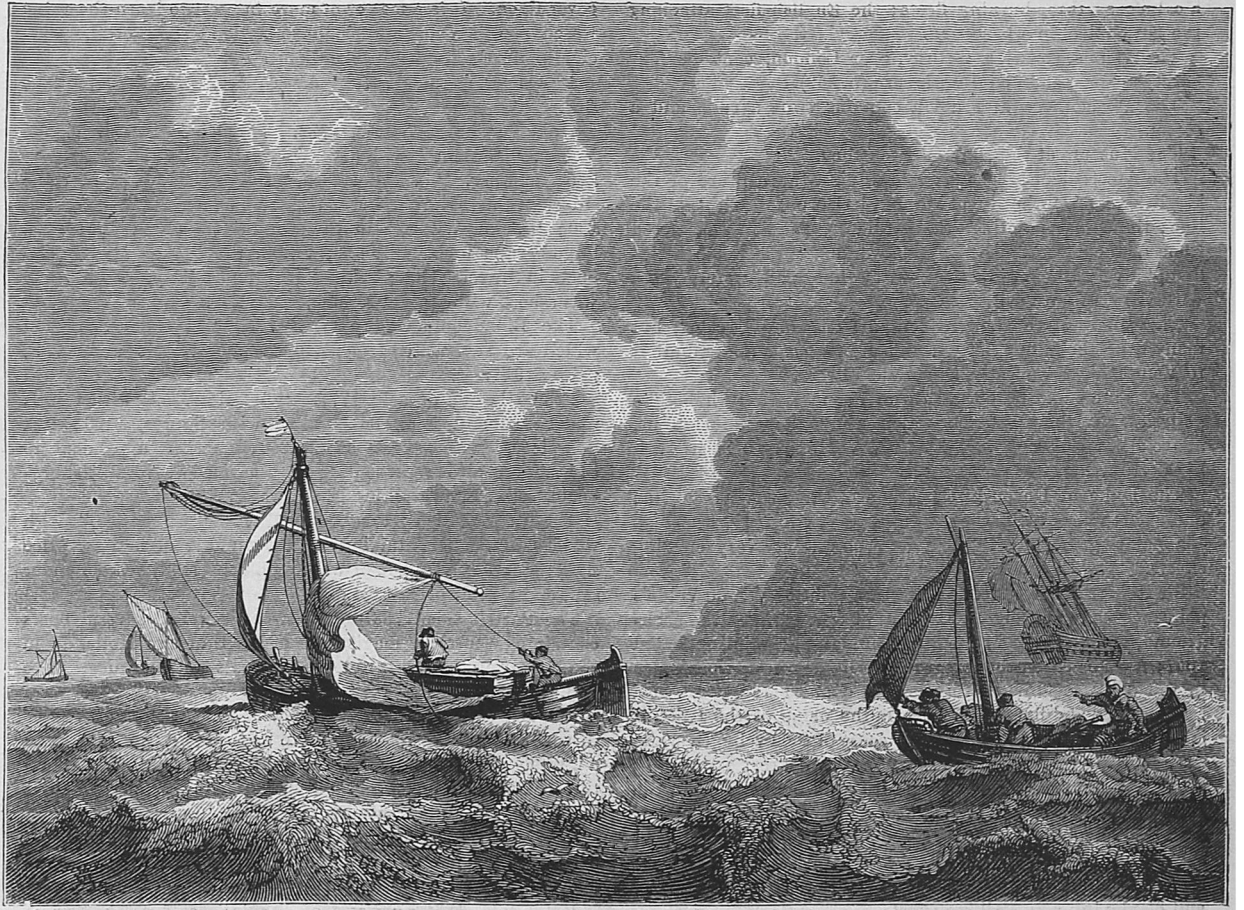
"What we esteem in this painter," says Lebrun, "is the
transparency of his colouring, which is agreeable and vigorous;

Weisbrod was fond of these, and excelled in them. In the Choiseul
collection his and those of Dunkerque are by far the best of their
kind. He engraved, for instance, the two landscapes, designed by

his vessels are drawn with precision; his small figures are sketched with spirit and judgment; his skies are clear; his clouds are varied, and seem to roll in the air." We might add here that the clouds of William Van de Velde are like those of Ruysdael: they have the same beautiful forms, the same agreeable masses, picturesque and contrasted without any affectation of singularity. They have also the same motion and lightness; they even seem charged with rain, but are never heavy, and we almost fancy we can see them blown along by the wind. "William Van de Velde," continues Lebrun, "is the first who rendered calm waters naturally, the sky, the fishing-boats, the vessels, and all other spectacles

are as rare as they are valuable." Van de Velde, in his old age, painted many historical battles in England, which have a reddish tone, and are not much thought of; hence they are distinguished in Holland by the epithet of "*English-make*."

In England, the admiration of the younger Van de Velde has for a long period known no bounds. Sir Joshua Reynolds, when president of the Royal Academy, said, in speaking of him, that another Raphael might be born, but not another Van de Velde. The very exaggeration of this sentiment would have been sufficient to immortalise him of whom it was uttered, even if his works had not really possessed surpassing excellence. More complete than Backhuysen, as delicate and as silvery



ROUGH WEATHER.—FROM A PAINTING BY W. VAN DE VELDE.

which the sea offers to our view. He is a disheartening model for those who wish to practise his branch of art. His pictures

Adrian Van de Velde, "*Pastoral Scenes*" as they were then called, in an able manner, though a little too delicately, perhaps. Ruysdael, Karl Dujardin, Pynaker, Weiotter—all the landscape painters, and, above all, those who had an eye to the picturesque—have been rendered by him with great felicity. He is liable to censure, however, for not having given greater size to the objects in the foreground, so as to enable us to distinguish the relative distances of the objects in the rear more readily.

More precise than St. Non, Weisbrod leaves less to the chances of crispness; his graver seems to take in at once the forms over which it has to run. His broken lines, short and waved in appearance, but in reality directed by a steady and skilful hand, are admirably adapted to the expression of broken-down walls, disjointed and moss-covered stones, creeping plants, and in general all the capricious vegetation of ruins. In proof of this, we may refer to his fine engraving, after Alex. Kierings, to be found in Neyman's "*Catalogue of Drawings*," printed in 1766.

These hasty sketches of Weisbrod's were also well fitted for the

as Dubbels, more brilliant and more powerful than Van Goyen, far superior in every way to Bonaventura, William Van de

reproduction of wild rustic scenes, and rugged, undulating ground—the chalky hills and unclothed soil of a Huysman—the brushwood of a Waterloo—the irregular and gnarled trunks of Ruysdael's old oaks, studded with tufts of foliage—the huge plants which flourish in the foreground of Pynaker's landscapes—and last of all those sandy hillocks, half-covered by flint and grass, which Wynants, and after him Adrian Van de Velde, painted with so much grace and devotion. Weisbrod bestowed great care on the management of the transition from black to white, so as to lend softness to those changes which are formed in nature by tufts of grass springing from a sandy soil.

In general, Weisbrod's great defect is his not putting sufficient variety on the sizes of his lines. It has also been remarked that his masses of trees sometimes resemble the decorations in a theatre, which appear on the sky in flat silhouette; we mean that as much relief is desirable in the middle as there is of precision and delicacy in the outline. Weisbrod has also engraved several small plates after Paul Potter, which never fail to render perfect the phy-

Velde is the painter of the sea. When gazing on his canvas, and on his alone, we can almost fancy we feel the spray on our faces, and snuff in the strong odour of the tar.

Mr. John Smith, in his catalogue of the works of the most eminent painters, sets down the number of works known as William Van de Velde's at 262, seven-eighths of which are in private collections in England, the painter's adopted country. In enumerating the pictures, we shall follow a different method of classification. First we shall take a run through the public galleries.

Hampton Court, so rich in the works of masters of every school, contains eight of Van de Velde's paintings:—a sea-piece in his Majesty's Gallery; in the Queen's Presence Chamber—two sea-fights between the English and Dutch; a calm sea; three burning fleets; the English fleet attacking the Dutch fleet in a harbour.

The famous Dulwich Gallery, near London, contains four—three calms, and one fresh breeze (p. 352).

The Pinacotheca at Munich contains two—a calm and a storm.

The Museum at the Hague—two calms.

The Amsterdam Museum contains six—the capture of the English vessel, "the Royal Prince;" that of four ships of the line; these two paintings are pendants, and are considered some of the most finished of his works. "View of Amsterdam," a very fine production; two calms, and a stormy sea with vessels in full sail.

The gallery of the Louvre contains only one—a calm; but many deny the authenticity of this altogether, and attribute it to Van de Velde's master, Simon de Vlieger.

These are almost all that are to be met with in the public galleries. In the private collections they are more numerous, above all in England, where Van de Velde was held in such high estimation.

The Duke of Devonshire has one at Chatsworth—a calm; and at his villa at Chiswick, a stormy sea covered with ships—a painting warmly lighted, and possessing very striking effects.

Sir Robert Peel's collection contains eight of Van de Velde's paintings—a sea covered with ships of war, barks in the background, and a coaster in the foreground, a fine painting, dated 1657; a calm sea, in the foreground a lighter, and two frigates in the distance—this picture is valued at £300; a coast with large vessels and figures—this bears the name of the artist, it is dated 1661, and cost £500; the coast of Schevelingen while the sea is slightly agitated—this contains a great number of figures by Adrian Van de Velde; it is one of the finest of the Dutch school, and cost £800; the coast of Holland, fishing-boat in the offing—a delicate, silvery painting, one of the most carefully-finished of the master; a view of Texel during rain, the sea violently agitated, bad weather—a work full of variety, and displaying very striking effects.

The Bridgewater Gallery contains six of Van de Velde's works—a view of the entrance of the Texel during a violent gale, a magnificent specimen, full of poetry and truth; a shipwreck; view of a coast during a dead calm; sea-fight—the "Prince Royal" surrendering to the Dutch fleet,—this pos-

siogony of the beasts, and are true and faithful expressions of the original.

Weisbrod retired to Hamburgh towards the year 1780, if we may judge from the date which appears upon his engravings, and there engraved several landscapes of his own composition, but he could not avoid imitating the masters whose works he had reproduced. He arranged his ruins in the style of Breenberg, and his pastoral scenes in the manner of Berghem; but one could not say of his compositions what was said of Huber and Rost, that he led one to expect more from his talents. Weisbrod could never complete an engraving; Dandet, Deguevancilliers, and the celebrated Lebas, gave the finishing touches with the burin to many of his etchings, particularly the "Flight into Egypt" after Teniers, the landscapes after Ruysdael and Pynaker, and two "Views in the environs of Meinen," of his own composition. He died, most probably, at Hamburgh, towards the close of the last century.

sesses great vigour of touch; and the capture of the "Prince Royal."

The collection of Sir Abraham Hume contains a great battle between the English and Dutch fleets in a slight breeze.

Lord Ashburton's collection contains "The Flotilla," from the Talleyrand collection, celebrated for the great number of vessels of every variety which are crowded into it upon a sea smooth as glass (p. 352).

Mr. J. H. Hope's collection contains two "Agitated Seas."

There are great numbers of them in other private collections in various parts of England, but to enumerate them would be tedious, if it were not useless. They are nearly all heirlooms, that pass and have passed for generations from father to son, and are in some sense as much fixtures as the houses that cover them. It is a matter of more interest to learn the value which Van de Velde's works have borne at some of the principal picture sales on the Continent.

M. Julienne's sale, 1767. "A sea-piece," price £41; another, £12.

Duke de Choiseul's sale, 1772. Three paintings of Van de Velde: "A Calm," with several vessels under sail, valued at £35; another, "A Calm Sea," in the background some ships, in the foreground near the sand some fishermen's boats, £30; "Calm Water," in the middle of which appears a large barque under full sail, and in the background several boats in the roadstead; in the foreground a jetty, below which was a boat with several sailors; price £68.

The Blondel de Gagny sale, 1776. "A Calm Sea," on which are several fishermen's boats and vessels under sail, price £19 livres.

Prince de Conti's sale, 1777. "A Calm Sea," with vessels under sail and small boats filled with figures, £126; "A Sea-piece," with several boats, £50; another, a pendant to the above, also representing a sea-piece—several fishing-boats, with sailors walking in the water, £34.

The Randon de Boisset sale, 1777. "Calm Sea," with vessels and boats containing a great number of figures, price £322; "A Coast"—a man walking on the sand, vessels under sail, and a boat, price £224.

The Partlet sale, 1783. "View of Texel;" several boats containing the chief magistrates of the States in Holland; in the background, a great number of boats and barques; price £96.

The Lenglier sale, 1788. "View of a great extent of Sea," in which vessels of all sizes are to be seen; in the foreground a barque afloat, and two men caulking her sides; farther on three sailors going on board a three-masted vessel, which is firing a signal-gun for departure; price £56.

Duke de Praslin's sale, 1793. "View of a Calm Sea," covered with a fleet of more than forty vessels, barques, yachts, and long-boats, £11.

Robil sale, 1801. "View of Texel;" same as the former one; £120.

Van Leyden sale, 1804. "View of a Calm Sea"—boats, merchant vessels, and passenger-boats, with more than fifty figures, whose action is admirable, £32.

Solirene sale, 1812. "View of Texel," the sea covered with ships and lighters; a sequel to the two former views of the same place; £120.

The Clos sale, 1812. "Great expanse of Sea in calm weather," covered by a large fleet; to the right, in the foreground, a man-of-war is firing a gun, and some naval officers are directing their course in a four-oared boat towards other vessels, to which a trumpet announces their arrival; £561.

Laperière sale, 1817. "View of a Calm Sea," valued at £360.

Laperière sale, 1823. "A Sea-piece," with a large vessel, some merchant vessels, and fishing-boats, £136.

The Chevalier Erard's sale, 1832. "View of the Zuider Zee"—calm weather—several large East Indiamen have just entered the bay, and are preparing to cast anchor; in the background a two-decker, and sailors exercising themselves in boarding; price £800. Three other paintings of this master figured in this sale: "A Dutch Fleet" of twelve vessels, £100; "A Calm

Sea," covered with ships of war, merchantmen, elegant yachts, barques, long-boats, and light gigs; £200; "A Shore in Holland," low water; the ebb of the tide has left a boat stranded on the beach, which some fishermen are striving to launch; two fishermen on the shore, a dog barking, and a man dragging a piece of wood which has been thrown up by the sea; £60.

The Duke de Berri's sale, 1837. "The Sea in a Calm;" several boats, one of them with a great number of men on board setting out for the herring fishery, a ship of war, fishermen launching a boat; £92 10s.

Heris de Bruxelles sale, 1841. "A Calm;" a group of boats in the Zuider Zee—a frigate at anchor, a small boat with fishermen, and a boat sailing towards the other vessels scattered along the coast; £390. "The Zuider Zee;" a calm, a frigate setting sail, and making towards the offing; two fishermen near a boat preparing to draw their nets; in the background a three-decker at anchor; £235.

Count Peregraux's sale, 1841. "A Sea Fight;" three fleets,

the English, French, and Dutch engaged; sailors in one place hauling at the ropes or shifting the sails, men in the water struggling for life, a boat rowing towards the admiral's vessel; on some of the decks the combatants are engaged hand to hand, smoke and shot are issuing from the port-holes, and some of the vessels are on fire. This is one of Van de Velde's finest works. It was sold for £800.

Tordien and Heris sale, 1843. "A Fleet Setting Sail;" the sea covered with ships, vessels of war, merchantmen, boats, &c.; £340. "A Calm;" two ships and a boat—the sailors on deck variously occupied; to the right two fishing-boats near the shore, two ships of war, and sails in the distance; £400.

Van de Velde never engraved, but he has left several drawings executed with great skill, both with the pen and with wash,—outlines sufficient to show him the state of the sea, the shape of a ship, or the appearance of the clouds. There are two of them in the Louvre.

"LA RENAISSANCE" (REVIVAL OF ART).

"La Renaissance" is a term which is now exclusively applied to the revival of art, the return to Greek and Roman ideas of beauty as displayed in the ancient statues, and the general diffusion of better taste in matters of art, which took place in the fifteenth century. It was in Italy, that mother and nurse of modern art, that this movement took its rise. It must not, however, be supposed that there were no painters there during the dark ages; not only history, but pictures still extant, testify to the contrary; but they were hardly worthy of the name of artists. None of them were scholars, and they followed their calling rather as a trade than as a profession. Their art was a sort of stupid mechanism stupidly followed, in which nature was not even imitated, but distorted. This state of things continued till the middle of the thirteenth century; and the first symptoms of a change appeared in the marked improvement of sculpture amongst the Tuscans. Byzantine rules had hitherto completely enchained the Italian artists, but they now turned from the works of the modern Greeks to those of their ancestors. There was in Italy a very good collection of ancient statuary, but it was not until now that they began to be studied. Niccola Pisano took the lead in this great work, and in various works, particularly bas-reliefs on the outside of vessels and ornaments, showed the Italian artists how much still remained to be achieved. His associate, Andrea Pisano, was the founder of that great school which produced Orcagno, Donatello, and the celebrated Ghiberti, the maker of the Florentine gates, which Michael Angelo pronounced worthy of forming the entrance to Paradise. The improvement in sculpture was followed by that in mosaic, the school of which had existed in Rome so early as the eleventh and twelfth centuries; but for want of specimens for study, painting long remained in a more incomplete state than either of the foregoing branches of art. The revival in painting is due to Florence, and the genius which presided over it was Cimabue. He appears to have learnt the art from some Greeks who had been invited to Florence, and painted in the chapel S. Maria Novella. The essential and fundamental principle of the Greek art, however, was a fixed and unalterable adherence to established rules, so that, every artist copying his master, no change, and, consequently, no improvement, could ever be effected. Cimabue, however, like most other Italian artists, got the better of his Greek education, threw off the yoke, and went straight to nature for instruction. "But his talent," says Lanzi, "did not consist in the graceful. His Madonnas have no beauty; his angels in the same piece have all the same form. Wild as the age in which he lived, he succeeded admirably in heads full of character, especially in those of old men, impressing an indescribable degree of bold sublimity which the moderns have not been able greatly to surpass. Vast and inventive in conception, he executed

large compositions, and expressed them in grand proportions."

Giotto made another step in advance, by giving greater chasteness to symmetry, more pleasing effect to design, and greater softness to colouring. The meagre hands, the sharp-pointed feet, and staring eyes of the Greek style all disappeared under him. This gradual transition was due wholly to the study of the antique. It was to this that many of the greatest geniuses of Italy owed their development. In 1349 we find the Florentine painters, who had now become a numerous body, forming themselves into a fraternity, which they styled the Society of St. Luke. Many similar ones were formed in other parts of Italy, particularly at Venice and Bologna. Those associations, however, did not include painters alone, but were open to all who worked at the various trades requiring most skill and dexterity. Painting was not yet looked upon in the light of a liberal profession, but still the *esprit de corps* was growing up amongst those who practised it. Giotto's discovery of oil-painting, towards the middle of the fifteenth century, was the crowning step in advance. The rest was left to genius; and how nobly genius did its part, it is not necessary here to relate. The beginning of the sixteenth century was styled the Golden Age of Art, though much remained to be achieved.

It was not, however, until the appearance of Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo that the Renaissance made its way beyond the Alps, and spread its blessings over France and the north of Europe generally. These great men belonged to what is called the Florentine school—a school which, though wanting in power of relief in drapery, in beauty, in grouping, as well as in many other points, yet always excelled in design. Da Vinci and Michael Angelo were its two great masters, and when they appeared they inaugurated a new era by pointing out the immutable characteristics and established laws of nature, thence deducing rules which their successors have since followed with great effect both at home and abroad. The history of the former of "these grand old masters" is a series of triumphs of the highest order, in which art seemed almost to have attained to perfection. We all remember the pleasing story which illustrates so strikingly the splendour of the ideal to which he strove to attain, and the indomitable patience with which he laboured in pursuit of the great object of his ambition. He laboured for four years at a portrait of a Florentine lady named Mona Lisa, but was never able to complete it to his own satisfaction, and at last relinquished the attempt in despair. Francis I. of France saw at Milan one of the finest of his works, "The Last Supper," and endeavoured in vain to saw it from the wall. Failing in this, he invited the artist, now in his sixty-third year, to accompany him to Paris. Da Vinci complied, and although he no longer continued to follow his calling, his presence in the